

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in the application. Claims 9 and 19-25 have been withdrawn from consideration. Based on the amendments made herein, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding Official Action.

By this amendment, Applicants have amended the claims to more appropriately recite the claimed invention. These amendments are being made without conceding the propriety of the Examiner's rejections, but merely to timely advance prosecution of the present application.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 6, and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Murphy (USP 5,103,976). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to claim:

a plate-like support element provided in an area surrounded by the frame for supporting the substrate, the support element having a first opening provided between the pair of first frame portions which penetrates the area surrounded by the frame so that the opening extends through said area surrounded by the frame . . . (emphasis added)

This feature is disclosed, for example, in Figs. 1 and 2A.

In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that items 36-37, 50 correspond to the "first frame portions," items 42-43, 50 correspond to the "second frame portions," item 32 corresponds to the "plate-like support element," and item 94 corresponds to the "opening" of the present application.

However, with regard to item 94, Murphy specifically states, in col. 8, lines 34-38:

Centrally disposed slots or access passages between adjacent pocket storage areas facilitate manual removal of the PGA components. For example, the intermediate beam

32 has a slot 94 formed in the upper surface centrally with respect to pocket storage areas 36 and 37.

As also shown in Fig. 1, of Murphy, the slot 94 is an indentation (or a recess) formed on an upper portion of item 32 (corresponds to the “plate-like support element” according to the Examiner), and does not penetrate the area surrounded by items 36-37, 50 (correspond to the “first frame portions”) and items 42-43, 50 (correspond to the “second frame portions”) as required in claim 1. Accordingly, Murphy fails to disclose or suggest the “plate-like support element,” as recited in claim 1. Specifically, Murphy fails to disclose or suggest “the support element having a first opening provided between the pair of first frame portions which penetrates the area surrounded by the frame so that the opening extends through said area surrounded by the frame,” as recited in claim 1. As Murphy fails to teach or suggest these claim elements, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as amended, is not anticipated by Murphy. It is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 3, 6, and 18, dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

(a) Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murphy. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2, dependent on claim 1, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(b) Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murphy in view of Ikeguchi (JP 10-007171). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4, dependent on claim 1, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(c) Claim 5 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murphy in view of Thomas et al. (USP 6,227,372). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 5, dependent on claim 1, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 7-8 and 10-17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations and any intervening claims.

Applicants, however, believe that these claims, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

A favorable determination by the Examiner and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the pending claims in the present application are respectfully requested.

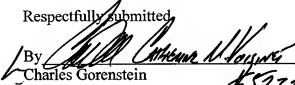
The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Amendment After Final in that it raises no new issues. Alternatively, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Amendment After Final in that it places the application in better form for Appeal.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi Reg. No. 40,417 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 
Charles Gorenstein
Registration No.: 29,271
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicants